

The Cooks

by J. Richards

All the children were upset
 When Mrs. Bean left school
 We loved her as a person
 Though she couldn't cook at all!

The last cook also left in haste
 Amid a cloud of smoke –
 Well, Jonny Finn had spiked desert
 With fireworks, for a joke.

And then, of course, before her
 Was the lady of the lamp
 So called because her curries
 Kept us up all night with cramp

We'll not forget Miss Long
 Because she only made spaghetti,
 And on her wedding day
 We cut it up to make confetti!

We never quite worked out
 What Mrs. Hall put in her bread
 But always felt it safer
 To bring rolls from home instead

Of Miss McGee's hot Highland Broth
 The legend is well known
 How little Philip Smiley
 Ate five helpings on his own

The story goes that Philip went
 From pink to white to green
 And Miss McGee? She disappeared
 And has not since been seen!

Madame Fromage cooked haut cuisine
 And taught us how to dine
 But would not make a single dish
 Without a good red wine

One day Madame Fromage
 Served staff fruit salad after lunch
 That went down very well
 Because it tasted more like punch.

But the parents weren't too happy
 When they all turned up at school
 To find teachers wearing party hats
 And having quite a ball

Miss flour just made egg sandwiches
 And, though she made them well,
 We found that she had not been taught
 To first remove the shell.

As Mr. Pulp, the woodwork teacher,
 Chomped upon his meal
 He paused with worry on his face
 At what his tongue could feel

A piece of egg shell had dislodged
 The gold tooth from his smile
 Though, now the gap's filled neatly
 With a broken bathroom tile.

There was one cook who didn't even
 Make it through the gate
 For they learned, but just in time,
 Of her last victims' sorry fate.

It never was made public
 But from rumours it appears
 That in one school where this cook had worked
 She'd poisoned them for years!

With Mrs. Chang we always had
 These great big bowls of rice
 And everybody loved her so
 Because she was so nice.

She even taught us chopsticks skills
 But lifting rice was hard
 And lunch would last until our mums
 Were waiting in the yard

Trifles, puddings, pastries, pies
 We gobbled up the lot
 But governors weren't pleased
 That with Miss Sweet that's all we got

One day she slipped and splodged pavlova
All over her shirt
The next newsletter said that
She'd received her 'just dessert!'

But that's all by the by, you see
For I'll not take my leave
Until you've heard the chilling tale
That I've had up my sleeve –

One day the school hired someone
Who seemed right in every way
Her casseroles were scrumptious
And her cakes too yum to say

It was a big relief to think
That, finally, they'd found
A cook who simply made good food
And handed it around

No longer would we let
Our hungry stomachs rock and rumble
For fear of burnt out bolognaise
Or ruined rhubarb crumble

The parents were, at last, content
That this cook was for real
And that their children would enjoy
A good, square, healthy meal.

But short-lived were those happy days
For we became quite wary
When we met all cook's feline friends
And everything went hairy

You'd be munching Waldorf salad
When there'd be a piercing squeal
And a Siamese or a tabby
Would have landed on your meal

Well, it all came to a head
When a small accident of fate
Meant the freezer was left open
At the same time as the gate

A ginger kitten darted
For the crate of frozen plaice
But slid and slipped and knocked his head
And landed on his face

A prefect kicked the freezer shut
Without the slightest clue
That our furry friend behind the fish
Was starting to turn blue

It was a good ten minutes
Before cook had cottoned on
To the fact that she was one mog down –
That little Jake had gone!

Cook made the staff and pupils
Search for Jake both high and low
And promised that, 'til he was found,
She'd let nobody go.

Well, Jake was most distressed by now
And, desperate to get out,
He scratched and scraped and wept and wailed
And threw himself about.

Alerted to the noise, cook cried:
"Oh, no, my darling Jake!"
But, frightened of the truth
She said: "there must be some mistake!"

Without delay a fourth year
Pulled the freezer door out wide
And cook gasped with delight
To see Jake shoot out from inside.

His tail was stiff and frosty white
But, quite apart from that
He seemed quite well
And all the kids thought he was one cool cat!